

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 12177 181507Z

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 ORM-03 SR-02 DPW-01 AID-20

DRC-01 /150 W

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R 181355Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7451

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 12177

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF PFOR IN BG PK

SUBJECT: SNAGS IN REPATRIATION

1. MEA JOINT SECRETARY PAKISTAN CHIB TOLD EMBOFF TODAY THAT INDIANS ARE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED ABOUT EMERGING PROBLEMS IN EXCHANGES OF PERSONS. KEY ISSUE IS NUMBER OF RESIDENTS OF BANGLADESH BEING ACCEPTED BY PAKISTAN AND SLOW RATE AT WHICH PAKISTAN IS CLEARING NAMES SUBMITTED FROM DACCA. BANGLADESH HAS SUBMITTED TOTAL OF 25,000 NAMES (NOT INCLUDING HARDSHIP CASES) TO PAKISTAN THUS FAR AND TWO-THIRDS HAVE NOT YET BEEN CLEARED BY GOP.

2. CHIB SAID THAT DELHI AGREEMENT HAD CAREFULLY NOT SPECIFIED TOTAL NUMBERS TO BE REPATRIATED. FOCUS INSTEAD WAS ON CATEGORIES OF PERSONS (GOP OFFICIALS, WEST PAKISTAN RESIDENTS, WEST PAKISTAN FAMILY MEMBERS, AND "HARDSHIP CASES"). ONLY
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 12177 181507Z

GROUP FOR WHICH SPECIFIC NUMBER AGREED UPON BUT NOT PUBLICIZED

WAS "HARDSHIP CASES" WHICH WAS CATCH-ALL TO INCLUDE "BIHARIS" OF WHOM PAKS AGREED TAKE 25,000. PAKISTAN HAS NOW, SAID CHIB, SENT INDIA AND BANGLADESH (VIA THE SWISS) A DIPLOMATIC NOTE STATING THAT PAKISTAN BELIEVES THAT THE OVERALL FIGURE FOR REPATRIATIONS FROM BANGLADESH SHOULD NOT EXCEED 52,000. CHIB ARGUED THAT EVEN IF ONE ADDS ON THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY RETURNED TO PAKISTAN THROUGH NEPAL THIS IS A COMPLETELY UNREALISTIC FIGURE AND SHARPLY DISCREPANT FROM THE 69,000 WHICH PAKISTAN HAD GIVEN INDIA IN THE RAWALPINDI ROUND OF TALKS OF PERSONS IN THE FIRST THREE CATEGORIES ALONE WHOM IT WAS PREPARED TO TAKE BACK FROM BANGLADESH.

3. CHIB CONCLUDED THAT, ASIDE FROM THE PROBLEMS CAUSED TO THE LOGISTICS OF THE TRANSFERS BY THE PAK SLOWDOWN IN ACCEPTANCES (PLANES ARE TRAVELLING FROM BANGLADESH TO PAKISTAN WITH 20-30 PERSONS OR LESS ON BOARD), THE PAK NOTE RAISED SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT PAKISTAN SINCERITY IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELHI AGREEMENT. BANGLADESH AND INDIA ARE IN THE PROCESS OF SENDING PARALLEL NOTES TO PAKISTAN QUERYING AND REQUESTING CLARIFICATION OF THE MOST RECENT PAKISTAN MESSAGE. (THIS ISSUE DID NOT ARISE IN THE AZIZ AHMED/SWARAN SINGH CONVERSATION IN NEW YORK SINCE THE PROBLEM HAD NOT COME TO A FOCUS AT THAT TIME.)

4. COMMENT: WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE NUMBER GAME IS CONFUSED AND THAT CHIB'S FIGURES ON NAMES DO NOT MATCH THOSE OF UNHCR (DACA 4556) BUT THE MAIN POINT IS THAT THE INDIANS AND BENGALLEES SEEM TO BE UNHAPPY. CHIB SAYS THAT IN PRIVATE COMMUNICATIONS, SATTAR SAYS THAT THE ONLY DIFFICULTY IN CLEARING PERSONS FROM BANGLADESH IS THE DELAY IN GETTING RESPONSES FROM DISTRICT OFFICERS, BUT CHIB SAID HE WAS BECOMING SKEPTICAL. CHIB EMPHASIZED THAT INDIANS CONTINUING WITH THEIR SCHEDULED TRANSFER OF CURRENT TRANCHE OF POWS THROUGH OCTOBER 31 AND DID NOT HINT THEY MIGHT BEGIN DRAGGING THEIR FEET AFTER THAT EXCEPT TO SAY THAT IT WAS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THERE WOULD BE PARALLELISM IN TRANSFERS. CHIB NOTED BANGLADESH WAS ALSO CONCERNED THAT SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF SENIOR MILITARY AND CIVILIAN BENGALLEES HAD NOT YET BEEN RETURNED DESPITE PAKISTAN AGREEMENT THESE WOULD BE FIRST CATEGORIES REPATRIATED FROM PAKISTAN.

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 12177 181507Z

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPATRIATION, REFUGEES, ARMISTICE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973NEWDE12177
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS MOYNIHAN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731024/aaaaarog.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19-Dec-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <10-Jan-2002 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SNAGS IN REPATRIATION
TAGS: SREF, PFOR, IN, BG, PK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005